CHAPTER II.

ACTUAL MORAL STATE OF MAN.

SECT. I.—NATURE OF THE JUDGMENTS PRONOUNCED BY THE CONSCIENCE.

THE two inductive methods of acquiring knowledge in physical science are observation and experiment. It has been doubted whether the latter can be employed in investigating the processes of the human mind; and it should at once be admitted that it requires certain modifications in order to suit it to the new object to which it is directed. Even in the physical sciences, experiment in chemistry is somewhat different from experiment in mechanics, and experiment in physiology is different from experiment in unorganized bodies; and we must expect it to require some change before it can be applied to a spiritual substance. While it is most dangerous in some cases, and difficult in all, to experiment on the human mind, it may be safely and confidently asserted that experiment can be wrought upon it. We suspect that the poet Byron artificially put his mind in certain states with the view of calling forth those gloomy ideas and convulsive feelings which he has embodied in his poetry. Such experiments, it must be acknowledged, are very perilous, more so than those which Davy tried with inflammable gases, or than those which Hahnemann, the founder of the Homoeopathic school of medicine, wrought upon the bodily frame, when he tried upon himself and upon a few friends those medicines which he adopted into his code. But the mental philosopher needs to submit to no such painful processes as those to which poets have

subjected their feelings, and to which anatomists have exposed their own bodies and those of the lower animals. It is only requisite that he present before the mind an object fitted to set